

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 COM-02 ACDA-12 AGRE-00
AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 DLOS-09
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-01 TRSE-00
H-01 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /160 W

-----067102 110543Z /16

R 110444Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5558
AMEMBASSY SUVA
CNO WASHDC
CINCPAC HONOLULU
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI
COMSUBPAC PEARL HARBOR HI
COMSEVENTH FLT
COMNAVINTCOM ALEX VA
CTF SEVEN FOUR

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 02504

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD AND ICA ADVISER

EO 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: OCLR, MNUC, TN, WS, FJ, US
SUBJECT: NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP (NPW) VISITS TO PACIFIC
- ISLAND STATES

REF: A) 77 WELLINGTON 04865 (NOTAL), B) WELLINGTON 01254
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(NOTAL), C) SUVA 0437 (NOTAL), D) STATE 074119 (NOTAL),
E) WELLINGTON 01508 (NOTAL), F) CINCPAC 040007Z MAY 78
(NOTAL), G) WELLINGTON 02309 (NOTAL) H) WELLINGTON 02082
(NOTAL), I) WELLINGTON 02483 (NOTAL)

1. MY RECENT OFFICIAL VISITS TO TONGA AND WESTERN SAMOA,
REPORTED IN REFS. (H) AND (I), GAVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO

DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF NPW VISITS WITH BOTH GOVERNMENTS. TONGAN KING TAUFU' AHAU TOUPOU IV READILY AGREED TO NPW VISITS, "JUST SO THEY DON'T DISCHARGE ANY NUCLEAR WASTES INTO OUR HARBOR." WHEN I OFFERED TO SEND MY NAVAL ATTACHE TO TONGA TO EXPLAIN THE VARIOUS ASSURANCES UNDER THE STANDARD STATEMENT AND THE LIABILITY ASPECTS OF SUCH A VISIT UNDER THE HOSMER RESOLUTION, HE ACCEPTED. LATER, I RAISED THE SUBJECT WITH PRIMIN PRINCE TU'IPELAHAKE AND WITH THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, TANELA TUFUI. BOTH JUST AS READILY INDICATED THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM WITH AN NPW VISIT. IN WESTERN SAMOA, THE RESPONSE WAS MORE TENTATIVE BUT STILL PROMISING. PRIMIN TUPUOLA EFI'S FIRST REACTION TO THE PROPOSAL WAS THAT THERE WOULD BE NO OBJECTION, BUT HE THEN DREW BACK SAYING HE WOULD HAVE TO GIVE IT MORE THOUGHT. LATER, I RAISED THE SUBJECT WITH HIM AGAIN AND HE AGREED THAT I SHOULD SEND MY NAVAL ATTACHE TO APIA IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO DISCUSS THE SAFETY AND LIABILITY ASPECTS OF SUCH A VISIT AND TO SURVEY THE HARBOR SITUATION. I BELIEVE THAT WITH A PRESENTATION BY THE NAVAL ATTACHE ON THE STANDARD STATEMENT ASSURANCES, SAFETY, AND LIABILITY, THE GWS WILL APPROVE NPW VISITS IN PRINCIPLE.

2. SUFFICIENT GROUNDWORK HAS NOW BEEN LAID SO THAT WE CAN MOVE ON WITH THE TRIP BY THE NAVAL ATTACHE TO
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TONGA AND WESTERN SAMOA AND, WITH THE APPROVAL OF AMBASSADOR CONDON, TO FIJI TO GAIN FINAL APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE FOR THESE VISITS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE MOVE QUICKLY THEREAFTER TO GET, PREFERABLY, A SURFACE NPW OR, FAILING THAT, A NUCLEAR POWERED SUBMARINE (SSN), BUT NOT A BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE (SSBN), INTO THESE PORTS. WHILE THE ODDS STILL FAVOR A NATIONAL PARTY VICTORY IN THE NOVEMBER 1978 NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL ELECTIONS, THE INCREASING VOLATILITY OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION HERE MAKES IT ENTIRELY POSSIBLE FOR THE LABOUR PARTY TO BEAT THOSE ODDS. WE WOULD THEN ALMOST CERTAINLY BE FACED WITH AN IMMEDIATE BAN ON NPW VISITS TO NZ AND A PUSH BY THE NEW LABOUR GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH A NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE ZONE (NWFZ) IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC.

3. IT HAS BEEN A LONG STRUGGLE GAINING THE DEGREE OF ACCEPTANCE FOR NPW'S THAT WE NOW HAVE IN NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA. WE HAVE CLEARED AWAY, IN ADDITION, SOME KNOTTY INSPECTION ISSUES. NEVER BEFORE HAVE WE HAD SUCH A RIPE OPPORTUNITY TO MOVE ON WITH NPW VISITS TO THE ISLAND STATES. THEY NO DOUBT WILL TURN TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA FOR ADVICE, AND

WE CAN EXPECT SUPPORT FROM THE PRESENT GOVERNMENTS.
I FIRMLY BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT DELAY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF
THE OPPORTUNITY WHICH WE NOW HAVE. IF LABOUR WERE TO
WIN IN NOVEMBER, A SERIES OF SUCCESSFUL VISITS TO THE
ISLANDS IN THE MEANTIME COULD DO MUCH TO UNDERMINE
LABOUR'S EXPECTED EFFORTS TO GAIN ISLAND SUPPORT FOR
A NWFFZ. IN SCHEDULING THESE VISITS, I WOULD URGE THE
NAVY TO CONSIDER THEM AS HIGHEST PRIORITY AND TO DIS-
REGARD CONSIDERATIONS SUCH AS SCHEDULING CONVENIENCE
OR THE DESIRABILITY OF INDIVIDUAL PORTS FROM THE POINT
OF VIEW OF CREW REST AND RECREATION. THIS IS AN INVEST-
MENT IN GLOBAL PORT ACCESS AND THE OPTIMUM TIME IS NOW.

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4. I ALSO RECOMMEND THAT CNO MOVE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

TO GAIN REACTOR SAFEGUARD CLEARANCES FOR BERTHS IN
WESTERN SAMOA, TONGA AND FIJI. IF ADDITIONAL INFOR-
MATION IS REQUIRED, MY NAVAL ATTACHE CAN INVESTIGATE
WHILE HE IS TRAVELING THERE TO BRIEF THE GOVERNMENTS.

5. I INVITE AMBASSADOR CONDON'S COMMENTS ON THESE
RECOMMENDATIONS. SELDEN

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Message Attributes

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